

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as indicated below. All claims are listed below, with amended claims so marked. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

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1. 1. (Previously Presented) A method for determining part replacement related information by an end user, comprising:
 3. obtaining an associated identifier of a first part;
 4. automatically coupling by a scanner interface the identifier of the first part to a network enabled browser;
 6. automatically retrieving by the browser from a remote database replacement related information for the first part;
 8. determining a replacement dependency between the first part and a second part which should be replaced along with the first part;
 10. automatically retrieving by the browser from the remote database, based at least in part on the determined replacement dependency, replacement related information for the second part; and
 13. automatically displaying by the browser for the end user the retrieved replacement related information for the first part.
 15. 2. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the identifier of the first part is a selected one of a UPC identifier, product-identifier mark, and textual product identifier.

- 1 3. (Original) A method according to claim 1, further comprising:
2 obtaining at least one user preference; and
3 arranging the retrieved replacement related information according to the at least
4 one user preference.
- 5 4. (Original) A method according to claim 3, wherein the user preference
6 is a selected one of limiting price, limiting distance to travel to obtain a replacement part,
7 limiting shipping time for the replacement part, limiting time to effect part replacement,
8 and only displaying a vendor having the replacement part in stock.
- 9 5. (Original) A method according to claim 4, further comprising:
10 categorizing the retrieved replacement related information into plural categories;
11 wherein such categories are sorted according to the at least one user preference.
- 12 6. (Original) A method according to claim 3, further comprising:
13 identifying at least one provider within the retrieved replacement related
14 information having a replacement part in stock; and
15 prominently displaying the at least one provider;
16 wherein prominently displaying includes sorting the retrieved replacement related
17 information so that the at least one provider is at the top of such retrieved information.
- 18 7. A method according to claim 1, in which the network connection is a link
19 with the Internet, the method further comprising:

1 providing the associated identifier in a predetermined format, such format being a
2 selected one of a bar-code format, a product-identifier mark, and a verbal identifier;
3 wherein a portable bar-code scanner is utilized to obtain the associated identifier.

4 8. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, the method
5 further comprising:

6 contacting a cross-reference hub;
7 searching the cross-reference hub with the associated identifier to obtain at least
8 one additional product identifier; and
9 automatically searching the remote database with the at least one additional
10 product identifier to retrieve replacement related information for the first part.

11 9. (Original) A method according to claim 8, wherein the associated
12 identifier is a non-unique product category reference, and the at least one additional
13 product identifier is partially unique.

14 10. (Original) A method according to claim 8, further comprising:
15 semantically analyzing the retrieved replacement related information; and
16 reorganizing the retrieved replacement related information according such
17 analysis.

18 11. (Original) An article of manufacture, comprising:
19 a computer readable medium;
20 wherein encoded on the computer readable medium are instructions capable of
21 causing a processor to perform the steps of claim 1.

1 12. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, in which the
2 replacement related information includes related part data identifying the second part.

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3 13. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further
4 comprising:
5 determining a geographic location for the first part;
6 identifying vendors of a replacement part for the first part, each vendor having a
7 geographic location; and
8 sorting the vendors according to their geographic proximity to the first part.

9 14. (Original) A method according to claim 13, further comprising:
10 providing a proximity preference, such preference set to user election if such
11 election has been made, otherwise to a predetermined value; and
12 culling the retrieved replacement information according to the proximity
13 preference.

14 15. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 13, further
15 comprising:
16 receiving user-specified price terms for a replacement part for the first part;
17 identifying, from the retrieved replacement information, a sales price offered by
18 vendors for the replacement part; and
19 culling the retrieved replacement information according to the user-specified
20 price terms.

1 16. (Original) An article of manufacture, comprising:
2 a computer readable medium;
3 wherein encoded on the computer readable medium are instructions capable of
4 causing a processor to perform the steps of claim 15.

5 17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further
6 comprising:
7 receiving user-specified price terms for a replacement part for the first part;
8 identifying, from the retrieved replacement information, a sales price offered by
9 vendors for the replacement part; and
10 culling the retrieved replacement information according to the user-specified
11 price terms.

12 18. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, the method
13 further comprising:
14 retrieving from the remote database replacement related concerns, such
15 concerns including warning and suggestions for a user seeking to replace the first part;
16 retrieving from the remote database identification of related parts requiring
17 replacement along with the first part;
18 displaying the replacement related concerns to the user; and
19 notifying the user of the related parts requiring replacement.

1 19. (Original) A method according to claim 18, wherein an expert system
2 interactively displays the replacement related concerns and notification of related parts
3 requiring replacement.

4 20. (Previously Presented) A system for determining part replacement
5 related information by an end user, comprising:
6 a scanner for scanning an associated identifier of a part;
7 a network-enabled browsing arrangement; and
8 a scanner interface facilitating communication between the scanner interface and
9 the network-enabled browsing arrangement, such communication including transferring
10 the associated identifier to the browsing arrangement;
11 wherein the browser automatically connects to a remote database over a network
12 to retrieve replacement related information for the first part, determines a replacement
13 dependency between the first part and a second part which should be replaced along
14 with the first part, and automatically retrieves, based at least in part on the determined
15 replacement dependency, replacement related information for the second part.

16 21. (Original) A system according to claim 20, further comprising:
17 a computing device comprising a processor capable of being directed to process
18 commands stored in a program memory, and an input/output port;
19 wherein
20 the scanner is in communication with the input/output port,
21 the browsing arrangement is provided as a first sequence of program
22 commands stored in the program memory for execution by the processor, and

1 the scanner interface is provided as a second sequence of program
2 commands stored in the program memory for execution by the processor, where the
3 scanner interface receives the scanned associated identifier through the input/output
4 port and provides such identifier to the browsing arrangement.

5 22. (Original) A system according to claim 20, wherein the scanner is
6 incorporated into the computing device.

7 23. (Previously Presented) A system, comprising:
8 means for scanning an associated identifier of a first part by the end user;
9 means for automatically coupling by a scanner interface the scanned identifier of
10 the first part to a network enabled browser;
11 means for automatically connecting by the browser over a network connection to
12 a remote database to retrieve replacement related information for the first part,
13 determining a replacement dependency between the first part and a second part which
14 should be replaced along with the first part, and automatically retrieving, based at least
15 in part on the determined replacement dependency, replacement related information for
16 a second part, such database searchable by the associated identifier; and
17 means for automatically displaying by the browser for the end user the retrieved
18 replacement related information for the first part.

19 24. (Original) A system according to claim 23, further comprising:
20 means for obtaining at least one user preference; and

1 means for arranging the retrieved replacement related information according to
2 the at least one user preference.

D1 3 25. (Previously Presented) A method for determining part replacement
4 related, comprising:

5 obtaining an identifier of a first part with a scanner communicatively coupled to
6 an expert system;

7 automatically connecting by the expert system over a network connection to at
8 least one remote database to retrieve, based at least on the identifier, replacement
9 related information for the first part;

10 determining a replacement dependency between the first part and a second part
11 which should be replaced along with the first part;

12 automatically connecting by the expert system over the network connection to
13 the remote database to retrieve, based at least in part on the determined replacement
14 dependency, replacement related information for the second part;

15 receiving candidate results from the at least one remote database; and
16 processing by the expert system of the candidate results to identify one or more
17 replacements for the first part.

18 26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the replacement related
19 information for the first part includes replacement related information for a second part
20 suggested to be replaced along with the first part.

21 27. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising:

1 displaying in a web browser a web page identifying the one or more
2 replacements for the first part.

3 28. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising:
4 obtaining at least one user preference; and
5 culling by the expert system of retrieved replacement related information
6 according to the at least one user preference.

7 29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the user preference is a
8 selected one of limiting price, limiting distance to travel to obtain a replacement part,
9 limiting shipping time for the replacement part, limiting time to effect part replacement,
10 and only displaying a vendor having the replacement part in stock.

11 30. (Original) The method of claim 29, further comprising:
12 displaying in a web browser a web page identifying the one or more
13 replacements for the first part satisfying the at least one user preference.

14 31. (Previously Presented) A method for locating a replacement part for an
15 item having one or more replaceable parts, comprising:
16 determining an identifier for a part requiring replacement;
17 providing the identifier to a network application program communicatively
18 coupled with a database searchable by at least the identifier, the database associating
19 the part with related parts of the item, if any, that have a replacement dependency with
20 the part and therefore should be replaced along with the part; and

1 retrieving replacement information from the database for the part and related
2 parts of the item, if any, that should be replaced along with the first part.

D) 3 32. (Original) The method of claim 31, wherein related parts associated
4 with the part, if any, are recommended by a manufacturer to be replaced along with the
5 part.

6 33. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
7 scanning the identifier with a scanner; and
8 automatically coupling the scanner to the network application program to provide
9 the identifier thereto.

10 34. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
11 displaying the replacement information to an end-user.

12 35. (Original) The method of claim 31, wherein the identifier of the part is a
13 selected one of a UPC identifier, product-identifier mark, and textual product identifier.

14 36. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
15 receiving a restriction; and
16 identifying at least one portion of the retrieved replacement information satisfying
17 the user restriction.

18 37. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
19 obtaining a preference; and
20 arranging the retrieved replacement information according to the preference.

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1 38. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein the preference is a
2 selected one of: limiting price, limiting distance to travel to obtain the replacement part,
3 limiting shipping time for the replacement part, limiting time required to install the
4 replacement part, only displaying vendors having the replacement part in stock, and
5 only displaying vendors stocking the replacement part and related parts, if any, that
6 should be replaced along with the first part.

7 39. (Original) The method of claim 38, further comprising:
8 categorizing the retrieved replacement related information into plural categories;
9 and
10 sorting the categories according to the preference.

11 40. (Original) A method according to claim 37, further comprising:
12 categorizing the retrieved replacement related information into plural categories.

13 41. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
14 determining sources from which the replacement part may be obtained;
15 identifying, based at least in part on the replacement information, at least one
16 source having the replacement part in stock; and
17 presenting the sources from which the replacement part may be obtained, said
18 presenting including prominently displaying the at least one source having the
19 replacement part in stock.

1 42. (Original) The method of claim 31, wherein prominently displaying
2 includes sorting the sources from which the replacement part may be obtained so that
3 the at least one source having the replacement part in stock is provided before sources
D) 4 not having the replacement part in stock.

5 43. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
6 receiving an oral utterance; and
7 converting the oral utterance into the identifier.

8 44. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
9 providing the identifier to the network application program in a selected one of
10 the following formats: a bar-code format, a product-identifier mark, and a verbal
11 identifier.

12 45. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
13 determining an equivalence identifier for a substitution part which may be used to
14 replace the part;
15 providing the equivalence identifier to the network application program
16 communicatively coupled with the database, the database also searchable by the
17 equivalence identifier;

18 46. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
19 determining an equivalence identifier for a substitution part which may be used to
20 replace the part;

1 providing the identifier to the network application program communicatively
2 coupled with a equivalence database searchable by at least the equivalence identifier,
3 the equivalence database associating the substitution part with related substitute parts
4 of the item, if any, that should be replaced along with the first part.

5 47. (Original) The method of claim 46, wherein the database and the
6 equivalence database are separate databases.

7 48. (Original) The method of claim 38, further comprising:
8 semantically analyzing the retrieved replacement information; and
9 reorganizing the retrieved replacement information according to the analyzing.

10 49. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
11 determining a geographic location for the part;
12 identifying vendors of the replacement part, each vendor having a geographic
13 location; and
14 sorting the vendors according to their geographic proximity to the part.

15 50. (Original) A method according to claim 31, further comprising:
16 providing a proximity preference, such preference set to a user election if such
17 election has been made, otherwise to a default value; and
18 culling the retrieved replacement information according to the proximity
19 preference.

20 51. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

1 receiving user-specified price terms for a replacement part for the part;
2 identifying vendors of the replacement part based at least in part on the retrieved
3 replacement information;
4 identifying a sales price offered by said vendors for the replacement part; and
5 culling the retrieved replacement information according to the user-specified
6 price terms.

7 52. (Original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:
8 retrieving from the database replacement related concerns, such concerns
9 including warnings and suggestions for a user seeking to replace the part; and
10 displaying the replacement related concerns.

11 53. (Original) The method of claim 52, wherein an expert system
12 interactively displays the replacement related concerns.

13 54. (Previously Presented) An article comprising a machine-accessible
14 media having associated data, wherein the data, when accessed, results in a machine
15 performing:
16 determining an identifier for a part requiring replacement;
17 providing the identifier to a network application program communicatively
18 coupled with a database searchable by at least the identifier, the database associating
19 the part with related parts of the item, if any, that have a replacement dependency with
20 the part and therefore should be replaced along with the part; and

1 retrieving replacement information from the database for the part and related
2 parts of the item, if any, that should be replaced along with the first part.

D/ 3 55. (Original) The article of claim 54 wherein the machine-accessible
4 media further includes data, when accessed, results in the machine performing:
5 scanning the identifier with a scanner; and
6 automatically coupling the scanner to the network application program to provide
7 the identifier thereto.

8 56. (Original) The article of claim 54 wherein the machine-accessible
9 media further includes data, when accessed, results in the machine performing:
10 determining sources from which the replacement part may be obtained;
11 identifying, based at least in part on the replacement information, at least one
12 source having the replacement part in stock; and
13 presenting the sources from which the replacement part may be obtained, said
14 presenting including prominently displaying the at least one source having the
15 replacement part in stock.

16 57. (Original) The article of claim 54 wherein the machine-accessible
17 media further includes data, when accessed, results in the machine performing:
18 receiving an oral utterance; and
19 converting the oral utterance into the identifier.

20 58. (Original) The article of claim 54 wherein the machine-accessible
21 media further includes data, when accessed, results in the machine performing:

1 determining an equivalence identifier for a substitution part which may be used to
2 replace the part;

D/ 3 providing the equivalence identifier to the network application program
4 communicatively coupled with the database, the database also searchable by the
5 equivalence identifier;

6 59. (Original) The article of claim 54 wherein the machine-accessible
7 media further includes data, when accessed, results in the machine performing:
8 determining a geographic location for the part;
9 identifying vendors of the replacement part, each vendor having a geographic
10 location; and
11 sorting the vendors according to their geographic proximity to the part.

12 60. (Original) The article of claim 54 wherein the machine-accessible
13 media further includes data, when accessed, results in the machine performing:
14 providing a proximity preference, such preference set to a user election if such
15 election has been made, otherwise to a default value; and
16 culling the retrieved replacement information according to the proximity
17 preference.

18 61. (Original) The article of claim 54 wherein the machine-accessible
19 media further includes data, when accessed, results in the machine performing:
20 receiving user-specified price terms for a replacement part for the part;

1 identifying vendors of the replacement part based at least in part on the retrieved
2 replacement information;

3 identifying a sales price offered by said vendors for the replacement part; and
4 culling the retrieved replacement information according to the user-specified
5 price terms.

6 62. (Original) The article of claim 54 wherein the machine-accessible
7 media further includes data, when accessed, results in the machine performing:
8 retrieving from the database replacement related concerns, such concerns
9 including warnings and suggestions for a user seeking to replace the part; and
10 displaying the replacement related concerns.

11 63. (Previously Presented) A system for locating a replacement part for an
12 item having one or more replaceable parts, comprising:
13 a scanner for scanning an identifier for a part requiring replacement; and
14 a device operating a network application program communicatively coupled with
15 a database searchable by at least the identifier, the database associating the part with
16 related parts of the item, if any, that have a replacement dependency with the part and
17 therefore should be replaced along with the part; the network application program
18 configured to retrieve replacement information from the database for the part and
19 related parts of the item, if any, that should be replaced along with the first part.

20 64. (Original) The system of claim 63, wherein the scanner is incorporated
21 into the device.

1 65. (Original) The system of claim 63, wherein the scanner is wirelessly
2 communicatively coupled with the device.

D) 3 66. (Original) The system of claim 63, further comprising:
4 an input for the device from which may be received a restriction; and
5 wherein the network application program operates to identify at least one portion
6 of the retrieved replacement information satisfying the user restriction.

7 67. (Original) The system of claim 63, further comprising:
8 an input for the device from which may be received a preference; and
9 wherein the network application program operates to arrange the retrieved
10 replacement information according to the preference.

11 68. (Original) The system of claim 63, further comprising:
12 an input for the device from which may be received an oral utterance; and
13 conversion logic communicatively coupled to the input and the device for
14 converting the oral utterance into the identifier.

D2 15 69. (New) The method of claim 31, the method further comprising:
16 providing questions to the network application program regarding circumstances
17 surrounding a failure, and receiving a response thereto;
18 determining based on the response that the part requiring replacement is not
19 broken but that an other part is instead broken; and
20 retrieving replacement information for the other part.